



## Best Practice 2

### CHIR@H- Chavara Institutional Reach at Homes

This name envisions the ideals of **St. Kuriakose Elias Chavara**, the great reformer, who revolutionised the education scenario of Kerala.

#### Objectives

The practices under **Chir@h** aim to enlighten the homes of people, by providing holistic education to their wards and instilling in them a sense of empathy and care towards fellow human beings.

#### The Context

The college is situated in a rural area and majority of the students hail from families belonging to the lower social strata. This context necessitates the provision of basic physical and mental well-being services, to enhance their capabilities and foster social empathy. The college's proximity to various healthcare institutions and care homes further requires significant contributions from students, particularly in areas such as blood donation, mental health support and financial assistance.

#### The Practice

Chir@h is operationalized through various cells and forums within the institution, where students play an active role under the guidance of their respective faculty coordinators. Support is provided to underprivileged students in the form of educational, medical, food and financial assistance. For those in need of emotional support, the KE counselling cell offers readily available services.

Besides, a fully functioning KE Blood Donors' Club is dedicated to assist patients by providing blood for transfusions at a very short notice. The college is strategically located near the only Medical College hospital in Kottayam District, as well as several renowned super-specialty hospitals like Caritas, Matha, Mitera and KIMS. Given this proximity, the college strives to meet the high demand for rare blood types in the region. To streamline the club operations, a blood donation automated web page was developed (<https://blood-donation.kecollege.ac.in/>),





that enables students to register and log in with their details and facilitating the swift identification of required blood groups.

As part of their social responsibility initiatives and articulation of empathy and care, students regularly visit nearby care homes, rehabilitation centres and special schools under the aegis of various departments and forums. They provide essential items to the residents and also spend time to empathize and offer entertainment. The empathy demonstrated by the students of KE College is particularly evident in their efforts to assist households affected by the flood-prone areas of upper Kuttanadu. They also showed their mettle during the Covid times.

### **Evidence of Success**

The number of students and families benefited from the activities of Chir@h testifies the success of the programme. The accolades received by the Blood Donors' Club itself prove the efficacy of its functioning. Students volunteered for blood donation, even during the horrid times of Covid pandemic. The college served as a collection and distribution centre during the 2018 and 2019 floods.

### **Problems Encountered**

- **Engagement:** It is challenging to involve a large section of students in these initiatives
- **Student Reluctance:** Although needy students are identified and provided with the necessary support, some hesitate to accept it due to concerns about their self-esteem
- **Increased Demand for Blood Donations:** The increasing number of trauma cases accentuates the challenge to meet the burgeoning demand for donors



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